

Brothers at Arms

by

Andrew Morris

INT. SCENE - PEGRAM HOME. LIVING ROOM.

The front room of the Pegram house, devastated by combat. The front windows are shattered by gunfire, and red and blue flashing lights are visible outside. 14 year old BEN PEGRAM and 12 year old MATT PEGRAM are seated on the floor, behind a barrier made up of furniture and sandbags. They are both wearing helmets and fatigues. BEN is holding a rifle, and leans back against the barrier, breathing heavily. MATT is holding an ammunition clip in one hand and clumsily attempting to feed bullets into it with the other. BEN turns, aims over the wall, and fires several shots, before ducking back down. MATT is crying as he works.

Caption: Jackson County, Wisconsin. September 17, 1995. 2:34 PM.

BEN

You got that clip ready yet?

MATT

A-a-almost.

BEN

Better make it a yes, I need that clip.

MATT

I'm working on it.

BEN

Work faster!

He pops up over the barrier and fires off another volley of shots, before ducking down. A volley of shots flies over their heads, burying themselves in the wall behind them. MATT gasps and begins breathing hard.

BEN

Matt, don't look at it. Look at that clip. Get it reloaded.

MATT gives no answer. He is frozen in fear. BEN tries to fire off another series of shots, but the rifle clicks. He ducks back down, snaps off the clip, and throws it toward MATT.

BEN

Matt, I need that clip! Matt! Matt!

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

The upper level of the substation is dimly lit. In the middle distance an assortment of disused equipment is mounted to the walls: relay panels and the like. The hum of the grid resonates in the space, but it is otherwise quiet. MATT is seated at one end of a very beaten long table. Next to him is HUDSON, who is watching him expectantly. Between them is a nine men's morris board sketched on a piece of paper. Several folded pieces of paper make the pieces, with HUDSON playing white, MATT playing black. They are midway through the first stage of the game, laying out their pieces.

MATT, however, is staring vacantly. Outside, there is a clatter and a series of yells.

Caption: Chicago, Illinois. Wednesday, December 12, 2012. 5:22 PM.

HUDSON

Matt?

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

A broomstick is driven down to the roof violently as it is crossed by another.

Zoom out. BROOKLYN and LEXINGTON are fencing with brooms. BROOKLYN has put LEXINGTON's broom handle down onto the roof with a:

BROOKLYN

Hah!

As BROOKLYN brings his back up, LEXINGTON draws his out and up, deflecting BROOKLYN's blow up and around his head. LEXINGTON puts BROOKLYN's attack aside and steps back, avoiding BROOKLYN's retort. They part, take new guards, and fence again, working their way around the roof.

To one side stand BROADWAY, holding a third broom and ready for action, and BRONX, watching the bout. Above, GOLIATH sits on the upper tier of the building, writing on a pad of paper quietly, studiously.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

HUDSON

Matt?

MATT

Hm?

HUDSON

It is your turn.

MATT

Oh. Uh.

He picks up one of his pieces and considers the board.

HUDSON

Any point you wish.

MATT

Yeah, uh...

He puts his piece down, finally, near some of his others. HUDSON shakes his head lightly.

HUDSON

Now, you must remember to guard your flank. You see.

He takes up one of his pieces and puts it down, cutting off movement for MATT's pieces.

HUDSON

Now you are trapped.

MATT

I thought I was supposed to make a row of three.

HUDSON

Aye, but that is not the only goal. To reach that goal, you must survive. To survive, you must be on your guard and you must see all around.

MATT

Hm.

MATT's attention has shifted elsewhere, though, and he is looking off into space again. HUDSON glares at him, irritated.

HUDSON

Or, indeed, if you are bored by this--

MATT

Eh? No, sorry. I'm just a bit lost in thought tonight. Thinking about my brother. Don't get hyperfocused, right? So, then...

He takes up another piece and puts it down at some distance from the others.

MATT

Like that?

HUDSON

Better, yes.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

BROOKLYN and LEXINGTON continue to fence, attacking and parrying and grunting the whole way as two warriors will when they are on their own time and happily training. BROOKLYN finally comes around for a descending cut from his right. LEXINGTON, in response, raises the broom over his head, handle down his back, to deflect the blow. Instead, LEXINGTON's broom snaps, and he is caught across the shoulders and knocked for a loop. BROOKLYN stops abruptly, breathing heavily. BROADWAY and BRONX react, and GOLIATH looks up from his work.

BROOKLYN

Lex, you okay?

LEXINGTON

Oof. Yeah, fine.

BROOKLYN helps LEXINGTON to his feet. LEXINGTON stretches his back.

LEXINGTON

Well, that's another broom gone.

BROOKLYN

Sorry. I should have checked up.

LEXINGTON

It's fine. I'll go get another.

BROADWAY

My turn?

BROOKLYN

Yeah, just give me a minute.

LEXINGTON goes into the substation.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

MATT

Where was I?

HUDSON

Oak Street.

MATT

Right. So, this guy came up to us, in a bit of a hurry.

LEXINGTON enters from the roof door.

MATT

And he says, "Hey, are you guys with the electric company? Can you help me? My building's on fire."

LEXINGTON

What was that?

MATT

Had a bit of excitement downtown a couple of months ago. So, we tell the guy, "Yes, we certainly can help you with that." So we go over there, and sure enough, his switchboard is smoking.

LEXINGTON

Nothing new, though.

MATT

No, nothing new.

HUDSON

Aye, so we make our own excitement.

He takes up a piece and places it on the board.

MATT

Wait, what?

HUDSON

You must be on your guard, as I said.

MATT

Oh.

MATT studies the board for a moment, stumped. LEXINGTON begins rummaging in a corner of the room. MATT looks up.

MATT

What, again?

LEXINGTON

Yeah, again.

MATT

You know, someone's gonna notice all these brooms disappearing eventually. Why don't we go get something at the hardware store?

LEXINGTON

He's stumped you that bad, huh?

MATT

Completely.

HUDSON

Aah, it is not that difficult.

MATT

I didn't say I was giving up. Just stumped for a moment.

LEXINGTON

Let's go.

MATT

All right.

He gets up from the table.

MATT

Hey, I may be late tomorrow night. One of the guys at work has a building that's got problems. I've got to go look at it last thing tomorrow. But I am going to learn this game.

HUDSON
I will be here.

MATT goes downstairs, as LEXINGTON leaves to the roof. Outside, the clatter begins again as BROOKLYN and BROADWAY begin sparring.

EXT. SCENE - J-MO'S HOUSE. BACK YARD. (DAY)

J-MO is standing in the back yard, axe in hand. He has several logs lying around him, with one set up on a stump or stand in the back yard. Some of the others are split, a few are mangled, many are still entire. LEVIN is standing nearby, coaching him.

LEVIN
Focus your attention. Up, swing, and through.

J-MO focuses, lifts the axe, swings, and jams it into the top of the log. He spits with frustration.

LEVIN
Through, through, always follow through on the swing.

J-MO
Yes, sir. I know that.

He un-wedges the axe from the log and knocks it aside. As he picks up another to set up, TYRONE enters the yard. J-MO looks over at him.

J-MO
Hello, Tyrone.

TYRONE
J-Mo. How you been?

J-MO
I've been fine. How about you?

TYRONE
Great. You got a few?

J-MO looks over to LEVIN.

LEVIN
Go ahead, take five minutes.

J-MO sets down the axe. TYRONE looks over at LEVIN, who is standing there, watching them.

TYRONE

Just us?

LEVIN

Why? Anything you can't share with friends?

TYRONE

Yes.

LEVIN

Suit yourself. I'll be inside when you finish, Jerome. Come get me.

J-MO

I will, Mr. Levin.

LEVIN goes into the house.

TYRONE

Bro, what's up? Where you been?

J-MO

I've been right here, Tyrone. Where else would I be?

TYRONE

"Where else would I be?" Dog, you crawl out a pod this morning, or what?

J-MO

I don't know what you mean.

TYRONE

You ain't talkin' like you. You ain't even acting like you no more.

J-MO

Mr. Levin's showing me a better way to act.

TYRONE

Ain't never been a problem before.

J-MO

Yeah, but that was before. You know those monsters who were chasing us? He told me all about them.

TYRONE

What he tell you? That they don't never chase no banker or what?

J-MO

I don't understand.

TYRONE

You been stiff as a board, dog. Shania says you ain't seen her for weeks, and Lamont and them say you never come around no more either.

J-MO

Ty, I've got no time for them any more. I have a job I have to do. So do you.

TYRONE

What job you mean?

J-MO

You remember Halloween?

TYRONE

Yeah, dog, how can I ever forget that.

J-MO

And you said we were like Batman and Robin?

TYRONE

I know I said that, but, dog, you ain't Batman. You more like his butler, you get me?

J-MO

You said you had my back.

TYRONE

J, I still do, but this ain't you.

J-MO

Tyrone, there are monsters out on the streets now. I have to do this, for

Auntie and for Shania and Lamont and all y'all.

TYRONE

Aw, J-Mo.

J-MO

Come on and help. You had them come after you too.

TYRONE

Yeah, but they let me go. They could of attacked both of us and they let us go.

J-MO

And you think they'll just do that again next time?

TYRONE

I ain't finna have no next time, J. They ain't bother me, I ain't bother them.

J-MO

And you really believe that's going to work?

TYRONE

You really believe you gonna take them on?

J-MO

Yes, when I finish training.

TYRONE

Good luck with that, Jerome. You're on your own. You want to talk sometime, gimme a call.

He leaves. J-MO watches him go. For a moment, he looks down at the axe in his hands. Then he puts the log on the stump/stand and lines it up. LEVIN exits the house.

LEVIN

Well?

J-MO

No luck. He's out.

LEVIN

You know the rule, though.

J-MO

Each one must reach one. Yes, I know. I
will keep trying.

He winds up, swings, and cleaves the log with one blow.

LEVIN

Good. Very good.

EXT. SCENE - PERRIWINKLE BUILDING

Late afternoon on a minor arterial street. MATT pulls up his truck to the curb outside a construction site. Advertising on the fences announces this is the Perriwinkle Building, with new luxurious condominiums to be available at reasonable prices very soon. Above towers the building itself: about 20 stories, more or less, of fashionable residential construction. Construction is stopped and the only person around is a young man (LOUIE) in a hard hat (reading "Seale Construction") and work clothes, waiting.

MATT gets out of his truck. He is also dressed in his work clothes. He locks the truck and goes up to LOUIE.

MATT

Hi, you Louie?

LOUIE

Yeah. Matt?

MATT

Yeah. What's up?

LOUIE

I dunno. It's all kinds of messed up.

MATT

Name me some kinds.

LOUIE

Well, they can't get the connections
straight, and, um, something about the
transformers won't excite.

MATT

Right, okay. You're working with the district engineers on this?

LOUIE

Yeah, of course.

MATT

What'd they have to say about this?

LOUIE

They didn't know, either.

MATT

I see. Hang on. I gotta text home to let them know I'll be late.

He pulls his phone out and sends a text message.

LOUIE

Oh, it won't take that long.

MATT

Maybe not, but I'd rather let them know where I am. They worry. Come on.

They go inside the building.

INT. SCENE - PERRIWINKLE BUILDING

Through a series of gray, unfinished corridors, LOUIE and MATT walk along. There is no sound from the construction work, and nobody else is around.

LOUIE

Just up here.

MATT

Right. Where is everyone?

LOUIE

I don't know. They must have finished for the day.

MATT

Kind of early, isn't it?

LOUIE

I don't know.

MATT

You don't seem to know a lot about this building.

LOUIE

Well, I just took over the project.

MATT

And you don't have the builders out here to help?

LOUIE

Well, I mean...

MATT

All right.

They arrive at a door with the sign, "Danger High Voltage," on it.

LOUIE

In there.

MATT

Your building. You first.

LOUIE

I don't have keys.

MATT

You don't?

LOUIE

No, I haven't gotten mine yet.

MATT

Well, okay. Maybe I ought to get the section foreman out. I'll be right back.

LOUIE

No, come on, that'll take an hour or more, won't it?

MATT looks at him carefully, skeptically.

MATT

Oh, all right.

MATT pulls out his keyring. He unlocks the door and opens it. As he pulls the keys back, he steps back and balls them in one fist so the keys stick through his knuckles. He holds this behind his back.

MATT

Lead on.

LOUIE

Of course.

LOUIE enters the room, followed by MATT.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB

LOUIE and MATT enter a dimly lit room. There are no transformers in sight, but there are a few items of electronic equipment scattered around. In the center of the room there is an exam table, with a harness at its head.

MATT

Listen, Louie, why don't you tell me
who you really--

MATT is interrupted by an arm around his neck, pulling him back. A hand comes up and covers his mouth as he tries to yell. He flails with the hand holding his keys, and gets in a few hits on his assailant, but is not able to get free before another assailant comes up and injects his arm. He continues flailing, but weakens and slouches down. LOUIE slams shut the door and locks it.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

BROOKLYN, BROADWAY, and LEXINGTON stand in a circle, at the center of which stands HUDSON, facing BROOKLYN. Each holds a wooden dowel, about an inch in diameter and four feet long. To one side stand GOLIATH and BRONX, watching.

HUDSON stares down BROOKLYN. He glances left at LEXINGTON, also in guard; then right at BROADWAY, also in guard. He looks forward at BROOKLYN, who tightens his guard. HUDSON attacks.

His first blow is caught and parried by BROOKLYN, who cuts around; the cut is caught by HUDSON, high. HUDSON thrusts at BROOKLYN, who parries the thrust and dodges out of the way.

From the left, LEXINGTON comes in with his own descending cut. HUDSON turns to capture it, sending it wide past his head. HUD-

SON cuts down onto LEXINGTON, who cuts up from below to knock the cut aside, and then back down. HUDSON cuts down to put that cut aside, and then exchanges thrusts into LEXINGTON. The thrust connects and knocks LEXINGTON back a little. He gasps, steps back, puts his dowel up, and retreats to stand by GOLIATH; he is defeated.

But as he does, BROADWAY lunges forward with a thrust at HUDSON's back. HUDSON looks back to see this, and then steps forward and around, making distance from BROADWAY. He puts the thrust aside and attempts to counterthrust into BROADWAY. BROADWAY, however, yields and cuts on top of HUDSON from above and the left. HUDSON puts his dowel up and right to deflect this and thrusts at BROADWAY's head. BROADWAY puts this aside, but HUDSON turns his dowel over and cuts across the side of BROADWAY's face. He is struck, he retreats; he is defeated.

Just as this goes forward, BROOKLYN re-enters the fight with another cut. HUDSON continues his "killing" cut against BROADWAY and cuts at BROOKLYN's head, missing it, and then coming around to cut down from the right. BROOKLYN cuts up and to his left to capture this, and then thrusts into HUDSON, who dodges and yields. HUDSON steps around and to the left, cutting up and left. Rather than dance around, however, BROOKLYN cuts firmly down onto HUDSON's dowel, knocking it out of his hand. Without missing a step, HUDSON brings his right arm up into BROOKLYN's neck, steps behind him, and throws him down, dropping a knee onto BROOKLYN's chest to pin him. HUDSON winds up and punches BROOKLYN in the face, very gently, to make the point. BROOKLYN releases his dowel and spreads his hands, and HUDSON releases him and stands. He helps BROOKLYN to his feet.

BROADWAY and LEXINGTON applaud, BRONX grins, and GOLIATH smiles greatly. HUDSON twirls the dowel briefly, and salutes his audience.

GOLIATH

Very well done.

HUDSON

I thank you.

BROOKLYN

(wryly)

Matt goes into the circle next, right?

HUDSON

No, we'll start him on mills first.
When he ever gets here, anyway.

LEXINGTON pulls out his phone and looks at it.

LEXINGTON

Oh, actually, he sent me a text.

GOLIATH

What does it say?

LEXINGTON reads the text, and frowns.

LEXINGTON

That he might be in trouble.

He passes the phone to GOLIATH, who reads it.

BROOKLYN

What sort of trouble?

GOLIATH

He does not say. Broadway, we will go
to his house. The rest of you go to
that building. If you find him, tele-
phone his house.

HUDSON

Come on.

GOLIATH hands the phone back to LEXINGTON. HUDSON takes up
BRONX, and they, BROOKLYN, and LEXINGTON depart in one direc-
tion, and GOLIATH and BROADWAY depart in another.

INT. SCENE - PEGRAM HOME - LIVING ROOM

(The same as at the top of this episode.)

MATT is crying as he works.

BEN

You got that clip ready yet?

MATT

A-a-almost.

BEN

Better make it a yes, I need that clip.

MATT

I'm working on it.

BEN

Work faster!

He pops up over the barrier and fires off another volley of shots, before ducking down. A volley of shots flies over their heads, burying themselves in the wall behind them. MATT gasps and begins breathing hard.

BEN

Matt, don't look at it. Look at that clip. Get it reloaded.

MATT gives no answer. He is frozen in fear. BEN tries to fire off another series of shots, but the rifle clicks. He ducks back down, snaps off the clip, and throws it toward MATT.

BEN

Matt, I need that clip! Matt! Matt!

Suddenly, a very large man in military dress (SGT. JOE) vaults over the barrier. (He has a hammer-Q logo on one of his shoulder patches.) Both boys recoil, but he turns, draws up a very large automatic rifle from his back, and fires over the wall at their attackers. He ducks back down and looks at them.

SGT. JOE

Pegram boys, right? Sergeant Joe, at your service, all rights reserved without prejudice.

MATT

Who are you?

BEN

Friend of the family, Matt. You know him. He has been for a while. Good to see you, Sarge.

SGT. JOE

Enemy's got us outgunned, boys. Time to move. You know how to get us down to the woods?

BEN

Yes, sir.

SGT. JOE
Lead on, I'll cover you.

SGT. JOE stands and fires on the attackers, as BEN and MATT, crouching, run the other way. JOE walks backward as he fires, in full imitation-Rambo mode, before turning and running after them.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS.

A sylvan glen in the Midwestern woods, filled with maples, skunk cabbage, and other flora of the region. MATT, BEN, and SGT. JOE rush into the woods, where they draw up to a stop.

SGT. JOE
Whoo. Well, I think we shook them for now.

MATT
Where are we?

BEN
The woods out back of the house, dummy.

SGT. JOE
We broke through the lines and made a break for it. Don't you remember?

BEN
Yeah.

MATT
No.

SGT. JOE
Aw, that's just the adrenaline talking. That's all right. I myself forget twelve things a day in the heat of battle. Now, which way?

BEN
Up here.

BEN heads further into the woods. MATT catches up close, and they are followed at a distance by SGT. JOE, who watches out for anyone following.

MATT
Ben?

BEN

Yeah?

MATT

It's just, it's a half a mile from the house, isn't it? How'd we get here so fast?

BEN

Short cut. Come on, Matthew, it's fine now. Make distance from--erk. Urgh.

He suddenly stops and drops to one knee, retching.

MATT

Benjy? What's wrong?

SGT. JOE

It's all right. It's just combat stress. The true soldier lives for that, a true physical sign of dedication to the cause.

BEN coughs a bit, and then looks up at MATT. His aspect is fully changed: it is now much softer.

BEN

Mutt? That you?

MATT

Yeah, Benjy. You all right?

BEN

Yeah. Yeah, I'm fine. Are you all right?

MATT

Yeah.

SGT. JOE

Come on, we gotta get moving. They'll be following us any minute.

MATT

There's a good hiding spot up this way. Come on.

He takes the lead. BEN stands and follows him closely, followed by SGT. JOE.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. CLEARING.

MATT, BEN, and SGT. JOE enter a small clearing at the foot of a hill, with a small cave in the side of the hill. There is also a spring at the side of the hill, feeding a small creek out. The trees and brush around the clearing are quite thick, and it's not possible to see out of the clearing into the woods beyond. They stop.

MATT

This is it.

SGT. JOE

All right, good cover, source of water, nicely done. We can stay here overnight.

BEN

How deep is that cave there?

MATT

About ten feet back.

SGT. JOE

Not a bad spot to sleep in. Well, how's a fire sound?

BEN

Not good. Won't they spot a fire pretty quickly?

MATT

No, not this far back.

SGT. JOE

Make it small, and nobody would ever know.

BEN

How about food?

MATT

Oh, that's not hard. Look here.

He goes back to one side of the clearing. A number of plants stand in neat rows. MATT indicates them.

MATT

Here's wild carrot, and indian potatoes. And here's licorice.

BEN

Everything you could want.

SGT. JOE

A fine little garden. Even nature herself provides for those whose cause is just. I'll start the fire. You know how to prep all of that?

MATT

Yes, sir.

SGT. JOE

To it, then.

EXT. SCENE - PERRIWINKLE BUILDING. ROOF. (NIGHT)

HUDSON, BRONX, BROOKLYN, and LEXINGTON land on the roof of the building. They look around warily.

LEXINGTON

That's definitely his truck down there.

BROOKLYN goes to a hatch on the roof and examines it.

BROOKLYN

And here's a way in.

LEXINGTON

So, let's go.

BROOKLYN

Are you sure?

LEXINGTON

What do you mean?

BROOKLYN

What if this is a trap? I mean, we've been hanging pretty close to Matt so long now. What if someone's trying to get to us through him?

LEXINGTON

Why would they do that?

BROOKLYN

Because it works. We can't stop from saving them. Maybe we should, once in a while.

LEXINGTON

And leave him behind?

HUDSON steps up to the hatch and lifts it. It is locked.

HUDSON

Lads, I have taught you never to let the goal prevent you from keeping up your guard. Do you remember that?

BROOKLYN

Yes, of course.

HUDSON suddenly slams his fist down on the hatch, popping it from its frame. He grabs it, rips it off, and throws it aside.

HUDSON

Now is not the time.

BROOKLYN

Let's go get him.

They all jump down through the hatch.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. CLEARING. (NIGHT)

A small fire burns in the clearing. SGT. JOE, MATT, and BEN sit around it. Each has a stick with the remnants of some roasted meat and vegetables on it, and they are finishing their meal.

SGT. JOE

I gotta say, kid, that's one of the better survival meals I've had.

BEN

Yeah, not bad. Where'd the meat come from, again?

SGT. JOE

From the rabbit.

MATT

What rabbit?

SGT. JOE

The one you caught, remember?

MATT

(hesitantly)

Yeah. Yeah, of course.

BEN

Really?

MATT

Yeah, Benjy, of course I do. Did.

BEN

Right. I must have dozed off for that.

SGT. JOE

Yes, you need the rest. Especially because you're going to take second watch tonight.

BEN

All right. If you take first.

SGT. JOE

Deal. If you're done, we may as well get situated for the night. Ben, I'll see you in about three hours. Matt, good night.

MATT

G'night.

BEN

Night. Let's go, Mutt.

They throw their sticks into the fire, then duck back into the cave. JOE takes up a position across from the trail into the clearing, next to the fire, and begins his watch.

INT. SCENE - CAVE.

A dark, damp space in the hill, maybe only three or four feet high. BEN and MATT squeeze back into the cave. They lie side by side on the floor.

BEN

Hey, Matt? You really caught and cleaned that rabbit?

MATT

Sure I did. Of course I did. Why?

BEN

I just remember the last time, that's all.

MATT

What last time?

BEN

The last time, remember? We got that old hare with the busted leg from under the house?

MATT

No.

BEN

You didn't want to kill it. I finally had to hit it with a shovel?

MATT

No. Maybe. I don't know. So what?

BEN

So how'd you get from there to here?

MATT

I'm not a baby anymore, Benjy. Combat toughens a man.

BEN

I know, but, it's just, I can't see you doing a thing like this.

MATT

You can't see anything. That's your problem.

BEN

Yeah. How'd you clean it? I mean, physically, how'd you do it?

MATT

With my knife.

BEN

Let me see.

MATT pulls out his pocket knife and passes it to BEN, who holds it up to the dim light coming in from the entrance.

BEN
You're right. I can't see anything, including I can't see a drop of blood on this.

MATT
Well, you know, I must have washed it off in the stream.

BEN
How'd you dry it off so fast?

MATT
Well...um...you know, I put it by the fire.

BEN
Did you? It's a little fire.

MATT
Of course I did, how else would I dry it out here? You were asleep. How would you know?

BEN
All right, maybe you did.

He passes the knife back to MATT, who folds and pockets it.

MATT
Go on, go back to sleep. Next watch is in three hours.

BEN
Yeah. All right. Good night, Muttty.

MATT
Good night, Benjy.

MATT rolls over and beds down. BEN lies there, looking at the ceiling, thinking.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB.

MINA, the lead technician, is working at the console of the lab. MATT is lying on the exam table, unconscious, with a set of gog-

gles over his face and some other medical machinery hooked up to him. LOUIE is in the room, still in work clothes. Over MINA'S shoulder, he examines the output of the console.

LOUIE

Running a little high on the cortisol,
isn't he?

MINA

No, it's fine.

LOUIE

You sure?

MINA

Louie, you want to run this machine for
a while?

LOUIE

No.

MINA

Then shut it.

LOUIE

All right. I'm just saying.

MINA

Well, don't. Central's really watching
this. If he wants to run a little high
on his cortisol levels, he's entitled.
It's his body.

LOUIE

How is it going, though, besides that?

MINA

It's going. He's putting up a little
more fight than I thought he would, but
it's manageable.

LOUIE

About how much longer, do you think?

MINA

Another couple of hours at least. De-
pends on how much more he skips over.

LOUIE

You want the guards back here meanwhile?

MINA

No. Waste of resources right now.

LOUIE

Think I got time to get us some coffee?

MINA

Yeah, probably about half an hour before the rough stuff starts.

LOUIE

Cream and sugar?

MINA

And a croissant if they have any.

LOUIE

Got it. Call if anything comes up.

LOUIE opens the door and exits.

INT. SCENE - PERRIWINKLE BUILDING. CORRIDOR.

LOUIE walks through the corridor, past the gargoyles, who are concealed in the doorways. He doesn't notice them. He continues down the corridor, out of sight, and a door closes in the distance. They quietly step out into the corridor.

BROOKLYN

That looks an awful lot like an electrical guy.

HUDSON

And he is working very late for a building that is so quiet.

BRONX sniffs the corridor. He finds a scent, and begins trotting along toward the hypnosis lab.

HUDSON

There's the trail.

They follow BRONX down the corridor.

They come up to the "High Voltage" door. BRONX sniffs at it, and then looks expectantly back at the others. HUDSON goes up to the door, and places one ear against it, listening for a moment, as the others stand off a distance, watching both ways down the corridor. HUDSON then returns to the others.

HUDSON

Someone is in there, typing. Beyond that I do not hear much.

BROOKLYN

Solid-looking door. Think we can breach it?

HUDSON

Not easily.

BROOKLYN

All right. Plan "B"?

HUDSON

Aye.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB.

There is a knock at the door. MINA looks up from the console. After a moment, there is another knock. She reaches under the console and picks up a Dellinger, then stands and goes to the door.

MINA

Who is it?

BROOKLYN (OFF)

Pizza Pal. You order a pizza in there?

MINA

No. Nice try.

She returns to her chair and sits. There is another knock on the door.

MINA

I'm not opening the door. Go away.

LEXINGTON (OFF)

Rescue squad.

MINA

What?

LEXINGTON (OFF)

Rescue squad.

MINA

Rescue squad?

LEXINGTON (OFF)

We're here to rescue that man you have
in there. Open up, please.

She goes to the door and opens it a crack. That is enough: it is flung open out of her hands. She raises her gun, but HUDSON grabs her arm and forces it up, then wrenches the gun out of her hand as BROOKLYN, LEXINGTON, and BRONX enter, closing the door behind them.

LEXINGTON

See? Honesty really is the best policy.

BROOKLYN

Thanks for your cooperation. We'll just
be taking our friend and going now.

MINA

I wouldn't if I were you.

BROOKLYN

Well, you're not. Come on.

He goes over to the exam table, followed by BRONX, who puts two paws up on the table and sniffs at MATT. Meanwhile, HUDSON passes the gun to LEXINGTON, who tucks it into his belt.

BROOKLYN

What is all of this, anyway?

MINA

Reprogramming.

BROOKLYN

What do you mean, reprogramming?

MINA

What do you think? He's gone off the
rails. We're fixing his mind.

HUDSON

What do you mean, off the rails? How?

MINA

What do you think?

LEXINGTON

What do you think? He's fine.

MINA

You would say that.

HUDSON

Next question: you do not seem perturbed that I am holding you here.

MINA

No. In fact, I'm delighted. I've been told to expect you.

HUDSON

Told? By who?

MINA

By whom.

HUDSON

(annoyed)

All right. Told by whom?

MINA

That's better. And, that's my secret.

BROOKLYN

Well, this has been a sparkling conversation, but we just need to go now. Lexington, come help me unhook him from all of this.

LEXINGTON approaches the table.

MINA

Lexington, you'd better not.

LEXINGTON

Drop dead.

MINA

I'm telling you, you'd better not.

BROOKLYN

Why not?

MINA

His mind is half in our machine right now. You unplug him, it's going to stay right there. You may as well make a spot for him by the door. All he'll be good for is a coat rack.

BROOKLYN

No. You're lying.

MINA

Try me. If I'm lying, you get him back, and you skip out of here with him and into a life of spiritual fulfillment, or whatever. If I'm telling you the truth, you've destroyed him and saved me a lot of work. Take your pick.

BROOKLYN looks hard at her. She looks back, just as hard. Finally, reluctantly, he backs off.

BROOKLYN

Bronx, down.

BRONX drops off the table and goes to his side. The console begins to beep.

MINA

And that'll be trouble. You may want to let me go take care of it. Unless, of course, you want his heart to give out first.

BROOKLYN

Do it.

HUDSON releases her. She straightens her clothes, and then goes over to the console and types commands into it.

MINA

Cortisol alarm.

LEXINGTON

What's that mean?

MINA

It means he can hear you. That's nice.
But it also means I have to counter-
stimulate a couple of things.

BROOKLYN reaches for his katana.

BROOKLYN

Get him out of that. Now.

MINA

I can't.

BROOKLYN

(angrily)

Don't you lie to me. I want him back,
now.

MINA

No, I can't. The program's been started
and he's too deeply into it now. You
just have to wait.

BROOKLYN

How long?

MINA

Four hours, tops.

BROOKLYN

It had better be.

He moves towards the others, gesturing for them to come close.
They gather around. MINA watches this with a certain level of
quiet delight.

LEXINGTON

So now what?

BROOKLYN

So, now we wait. Get Goliath on the
phone and let him know where we are.

LEXINGTON

On it.

BROOKLYN
(raising his voice)
And if she does anything to harm him,
we make sure she pays full price.

INT. SCENE - CAVE.

BEN and MATT are sleeping in the cave. From outside come the sounds of crickets, night birds, and so on. Suddenly, there is a howling roar.

SGT. JOE (OFF)
Up! Up and out!

BEN and MATT snap awake and sit up.

MATT
What is it?

BEN
I don't know.

SGT. JOE (OFF)
Up and out! We're under attack!

BEN and MATT scuttle out of the cave.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. CLEARING. (NIGHT)

BEN and MATT climb out of the cave. A wild-eyed SGT. JOE is pointing his rifle to the sky.

BEN
What is it? Did they catch up to us?

SGT. JOE
Worse than that, boys. Attack from
above. Arm yourselves! Here they come!

BEN and MATT take up their rifles. As they do, the howling comes from above, again. BROOKLYN descends on SGT. JOE, who fires at him as he swoops down. BROOKLYN loops around and goes up again.

BEN
What is that?

SGT. JOE
Our true enemy. Fire!

BEN raises his rifle and fires several times, tracking across the sky as he does so. HUDSON dives for SGT. JOE, clawing for his rifle but failing to get it. As he swoops back up, SGT. JOE fires on him. LEXINGTON dives at MATT, knocking him off balance and forcing him to drop his rifle, before swooping back up.

BEN

Matt! Are you all right?

MATT

Yeah. Hey, watch out!

BRONX leaps out of the underbrush and toward MATT, who dodges him narrowly. BRONX lands, turns short, and then charges SGT. JOE, grasping for his rifle with his jaws. SGT. JOE wrenches it away. HUDSON, with a roar, dives at SGT. JOE again with his sword drawn, but this time he does not attack; he cuts off and swoops around, landing on the hillside a little above the cave.

MATT, having recovered his rifle, turns and aims at HUDSON, but stops short of firing. He locks eyes with HUDSON, who is watching him with a trace of sorrow. HUDSON lowers his sword.

BEN

Matt! Watch it!

MATT spins around and ducks in time to avoid an attack from BRONX. At the same time, BROOKLYN lands directly on BEN and forces him to the ground. They wrestle.

BROOKLYN

Pitiful human! Now I have you!

BEN

Gaagh! No! Matt!

MATT

Get off him! Sarge!

SGT. JOE turns to help, but is prevented by BRONX charging him again. They fight, SGT. JOE parrying BRONX's jaws with his rifle.

BROOKLYN

No help for you, kid. Now you die!

MATT charges in to intervene. LEXINGTON drops in between him and them.

LEXINGTON

Where do you think you're going, kid?
Let's play.

MATT

Let's not.

LEXINGTON lunges at him. MATT swings the butt of his rifle around, catching him in the jaw and deflecting him around. MATT turns to face him. LEXINGTON snarls, and squares off with him, eyes alight.

LEXINGTON

You think you can take me, pup? Come on.

MATT

What is this? Why are you attacking us?

LEXINGTON

It's what we do.

MATT

(shocked)

What?

LEXINGTON charges him again. MATT catches him in the chest with the butt of his rifle and pushes him back. LEXINGTON grabs the rifle from him, and throws it away, before lunging in again. This time, LEXINGTON gets his hands around MATT's neck, but MATT gets one leg up into his belly. The two of them fall backward, and MATT kicks LEXINGTON off, sending him flying. MATT rolls up and runs toward BEN and BROOKLYN.

MATT

You get off him, get off of him, aagh!

As he screams, he jumps at BROOKLYN, tackling him to the ground. MATT begins punching him, and they fight.

BROOKLYN

You squab!

MATT

I'm not letting you take my brother!

MATT catches him on the chin, and starts to get the better of him. Suddenly, BROOKLYN throws MATT off, and retreats.

BROOKLYN

Curse you! This isn't the last you'll hear of us. These woods are long, and so is the night. Keep your watch, humans! Brothers! Away!

He leaps up into the trees with a howl, answered by the others, and they depart into the woods.

MATT

Ben! Are you all right?

BEN

Yeah, fine.

MATT

Sarge!

SGT. JOE

All right, kid.

MATT

Man. That guy smelled like a gym mat. Who were they?

SGT. JOE

Denizens of the forest. They've been at war with the human race for ages. You know all those people who disappear in the woods?

MATT

Yeah?

SGT. JOE

One of them feeds that pack for a month.

MATT

Ohh.

BEN

Are you hurt?

MATT

No, I just smell like armpit now, that's all. So what do we do now?

SGT. JOE

Well, they don't usually attack twice in one night. Still, we'd better keep up the guard. Ben, you're just about up. Can you keep the watch for the next few hours?

BEN

Yeah, I'm good.

MATT

And I'm on after him?

BEN

You're on in three.

SGT. JOE

I'll turn in. If you don't mind, I think I'll sleep out here for now. Not a big fan of caves.

MATT

All right. Good night.

BEN

Good night.

MATT climbs into the cave, as SGT. JOE settles in to sleep against the hillside. BEN looks around, sniffs, and stirs the fire.

BEN

Right. I knew it.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB.

MINA is still at the console. BROOKLYN, HUDSON, LEXINGTON, and BRONX are settled in to watch, impatiently, with BRONX lying alongside the table. HUDSON is at the head of the table, looking at MATT, who is twitching.

MINA

Just going through some active reprogramming right now. Perfectly normal.

LEXINGTON

What's that?

MINA

Oh, it's pretty simple. Just a form of aversion therapy, at its base. Give him some images, stimulate the right parts of his visual cortex, and pretty soon he learns.

LEXINGTON

How are you putting the images in his head if he's knocked out?

MINA

Well, images might be the wrong term. Stimuli, mostly. The right pattern in the headset hits the right memory centers, and his mind fills in the blanks.

HUDSON

So he is dreaming.

MINA

Mmm, more or less, I suppose. A controlled dream, admittedly.

HUDSON

About what?

LOUIE

(from behind BROOKLYN)

What do you expect?

LOUIE has his gun pressed into BROOKLYN's back. Two coffees and a paper bag sit on a desk near the door.

LOUIE

You know the drill. No sudden moves, and up against that wall--

BROOKLYN spins around, catching LOUIE around the legs with his tail and dropping him. Behind BROOKLYN, GOLIATH appears, followed by BROADWAY. GOLIATH drops onto LOUIE instantly, tearing the revolver from his grasp.

GOLIATH

No. You get against that wall, now.

LOUIE looks at him, stunned. After a moment, he resigns himself to being captured. GOLIATH releases him, and he stands, dusts himself off, and goes to the wall. He leans back against it. GO-

LIATH crimps the barrel of his revolver, folding it in half, and drops it into a wastebasket. He then goes over to the exam table.

BROOKLYN

Anyone else we should be expecting?

LOUIE

No. Just us.

GOLIATH

Were you expecting us, too?

LOUIE

Of course. Hooray, the gang's all here.
Hey, Mina?

MINA

Yeah?

LOUIE

You mind passing me my coffee? I don't
think Rodan here wants me off this
wall.

MINA stands from the console and picks up the coffee and the bag from the desk.

BROADWAY

You're not in a position to be calling
names, you know.

LOUIE

Oh? Oh, ho ho. No, no, maybe not. Fine,
you win. Take your friend and go, then.

MINA

No, I already told them.

LOUIE

You what?

GOLIATH

What did she tell you?

BROOKLYN

Matt's deep into the machine.

GOLIATH

Is he all right?

LEXINGTON

No. If we pull him off now, he could be broken.

MINA gives LOUIE his coffee.

LOUIE

Mina, we talked about this.

MINA

Well, I couldn't let them ruin the whole thing now, could I.

LOUIE

Of course you could. What could be better--

MINA

Oh, hush. That's your problem, always looking for short cuts. If I were in charge--

LOUIE

(annoyed)

You are.

MINA

Oh, gee, yeah, I guess I am. So I guess that, if I want him here for the full cycle, he stays here.

BROOKLYN

Excuse me? Are we still a part of this? Or are you just falling in love now?

MINA

No. Butt out. (to LOUIE) So he stays. So they don't take him. So there.

LOUIE

All right, you win. But when Central calls--

MINA

Central wants results to the plan, not speed. They can wait an extra hour or two for it.

HUDSON

Who is Central?

LOUIE

Prime contractor.

MINA

Now, if you're through, I need to check and make sure he's got enough oxygen.

LOUIE

Please do.

MINA returns to the console and continues operating it. GOLIATH goes to the others. They give him a look of impatient disgust, a look he turns and repeats over his shoulder toward MINA. They can do nothing but wait.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. CLEARING.

It is dawn, and the sunlight begins to stream down through the trees. A light mist lies on the ground and down through the woods. MATT is seated atop the cave entrance, keeping watch, as SGT. JOE sleeps nearby. BEN emerges from the cave, rubbing his eyes.

MATT

Morning, Benjy.

BEN

Morning, Mutt. Anything overnight?

MATT

No. All quiet.

BEN

Good.

BEN goes up the hillside and sits next to MATT.

BEN

Hey, Matt?

MATT

Yeah?

BEN

You believe what happened last night?

MATT

Creatures from the sky? Crazy, right?

BEN

No, I don't just mean that. I mean, the way they talked, and all.

MATT

You heard them. So did I.

BEN

How about my rifle?

MATT

What about it?

BEN

How'd it get reloaded?

MATT

Well...I...I don't know. You must have reloaded it--

BEN

No, Mutt. Come on. Reloaded it with licorice root? 'Cause we don't have any bullets, I know that much. We left them all up at the house.

MATT

I don't know, Benjy. Honestly, I don't.

BEN

You don't know? Or you don't want to know?

SGT. JOE wakes up.

SGT. JOE

Morning, boys. Hey, you're not gonna fight so early, are you?

BEN

Need to do something to keep busy.

MATT looks at him, curiously. BEN eyes him back, but says nothing else.

MATT

We're just hashing out a couple of things, sarge.

SGT. JOE

Oh, that's good. Airing out differences strengthens the unit, always a good thing. Well, I think we'd better get on the road pronto, don't you?

BEN

I suppose so.

MATT

Yeah.

SGT. JOE

Get the fire out and get your things.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. TRAIL.

MATT, BEN, and SGT. JOE are walking down a trail through the woods.

BEN

The thing I don't understand is, what happened to the enemy? Weren't they following us?

SGT. JOE

No, they only come out at night.

BEN

No, I mean, the people shooting at us back at the house. The cops.

SGT. JOE

They must have given up.

BEN

But why? They went to all that trouble to pin us down, and then we just sneak out, and that's it?

MATT

Maybe so. Maybe they know about the gargoyles.

BEN

But, how could they? We didn't know about them until last night, and then-- whoa!

BEN trips, and lands in mud. MATT laughs.

MATT

Benjy, you got your head in the clouds too much.

SGT. JOE

Gotta watch the trail, Ben.

BEN

Aw, shut up. Help me up.

MATT helps BEN stand up.

MATT

Ugh. What a mess.

SGT. JOE

Come on, you can wash out at the next stream.

He starts off. MATT and BEN walk together, several paces back.

BEN

I'm telling you, Mutt, something funny is going on.

MATT

You've been saying that since yesterday.

BEN

It's been going on since then.

MATT

Benjy, what's the problem? We're free, aren't we? We're alive, we're escaping. What's the matter?

BEN
That's just it.

MATT
You want to be back there in the fire-
fight again?

BEN
No. I want to be with my brother.

MATT
Then come on.

MATT hurries up to catch SGT. JOE, with BEN following.

Later: it is beginning to get dark. SGT. JOE, MATT, and a
cleaned-up BEN are continuing to hike up the trail, through the
brush. SGT. JOE stops.

SGT. JOE
What do you think? Good place to stop?

MATT
Looks good to me.

BEN
Same here.

SGT. JOE
Right. Take a breather. I'm going to
scout around a bit, look for a good
spot to bunk down for the night.
Shouldn't be much further to get into
town.

MATT
All right. Be careful.

SGT. JOE continues up the trail and disappears from sight. BEN
and MATT sit.

MATT
Benjy?

BEN
Yeah?

MATT

What did you mean when you said the problem was us escaping?

BEN

I can't tell you. Why do you ask?

MATT

I keep thinking. Last night, when those gargoyles attacked us, one of them went up the hill and was just watching me. He could have come back, or I could have shot him, but he was just sitting there, staring at me, me staring at him.

BEN

What about it?

MATT

It was like he was saying, "You know this is wrong."

BEN

Do you?

MATT

Do I what?

BEN

Do you know it's wrong?

MATT gapes a bit, unsure of how to answer.

BEN

What was it that attacked us last night?

MATT

It was gargoyles.

BEN

Yeah, it was. How do you know that? They never said that, and neither Sarge or I called them that.

MATT

It's...yeah. Yeah, it's wrong.

BEN

What else?

MATT

All the things you've said so far. My knife, your gun, the plants we ate, the rabbit. Your clothes are dry.

BEN

Good, you noticed that.

MATT

Benjy, what's going on?

BEN

You're alive, and I'm alive. That's all I got right now.

He looks over at MATT, who is beginning to weep.

BEN

(gently)

Yeah. I know. That too.

MATT

Don't say anything about that.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB

MINA continues to work the console. LOUIE is still leaning against the wall, bored to tears. The gargoyles are waiting, with BROADWAY standing near MATT.

GOLIATH

You still have not said what all of this is for.

MINA

It's a form of therapy to help--

BROOKLYN

Yeah, yeah, yeah, we got all of that. What are you putting in his head?

MINA

We're correcting a character trait of his that's going to get everyone in a lot of trouble someday.

BROADWAY

What's that?

MINA

He makes too many friends.

GOLIATH

That is not a defect. It is a strength.

MINA

Oh? Turns out he's made some friends that are going to put this city in danger.

BROOKLYN

And what friends are these that you're supposedly steering him away from?

LOUIE

Wow. You really don't know?

MINA

We needed a stimulus to hook into his brain. We could go through the visual cortex, sure, but there isn't anything like the real thing.

LOUIE

Viz, you.

BROOKLYN

So it is a trap.

MINA

Not exactly, but close enough.

BROADWAY

(to MATT)

Listen, bud, you know us. We're here for you. Don't let them break your head.

MINA

Good, keep doing that. He needs the stimulus.

BROADWAY

You shut up, or I'm going to break your head.

LOUIE

Oh, threats! Exactly what we needed,
thanks.

GOLIATH

Come away from there.

BROADWAY, agitated, leaves MATT's side. MINA examines the console.

MINA

Louie's right, though. He's fighting
something off, and hard.

LEXINGTON

What, us?

MINA

Could be. No way to know from here, but
it'll be fascinating to find out once
he wakes up.

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. TRAIL. (DUSK)

BEN and MATT are still sitting together, talking. MATT is still weeping.

BEN

You know what's going on, though. You
can't ignore it.

MATT

Stop it, Ben. Don't talk about it.

BEN

Matt. It's the 18th of September, 1995.
You know what happened yesterday.

MATT

It can't have.

BEN

You know I didn't survive that fight.
You know I'm dead.

MATT

But you're not!

BEN

But I am. So how can I be here?

MATT

Because it's not real.

BEN

Yes, it's real. It's as real as anything else. I am really your brother Ben. But it's all in your head.

MATT

So what's that mean? So I've gotta spend the next 17 years on my own, get past this, get a job, without my brother--

BEN

Yes, you do. That's how you grow into who you become. I wouldn't want you to do anything else. I won't let you.

MATT

I don't want to. I want to stay here.

BEN

You can't. You know that you can't. You have to grow up sometime.

MATT

I don't want to do it without my brother.

BEN

Oh, Mutt. You never did. I'm here and I always will be. But you have to keep going out there. You have people counting on you. Don't let them down, not for my sake.

MATT

What people?

BEN

You know what people. I guess you can't see it now. They got you bad. Everything's kind of screwed up, but it'll come clean. I promise. My brother's

gonna get them. My brother is a hero
and he always has been.

MATT grabs BEN and hugs him, and BEN returns it.

BEN
Matthew Pegram, you get out there and
save the world. Remember your brother
loves you very much, okay?

MATT
I will. Love you too, Ben.

BEN
I know. All right.

They separate. BEN snuffles.

BEN
Now. Don't tell anyone I said that,
okay? They might talk.

MATT
I won't. How much longer are you stay-
ing?

BEN
Not long, I don't think. Doesn't feel
like--

There is suddenly a howl from above.

BEN
Yeah, that'd be my cue, I guess.

BEN steps a few feet away, scanning the sky, then turns to face
MATT.

BEN
Say hello to Luke for me, too. I'm glad
he's not having to deal with this.

MATT
I will.

BEN
Now, whatever happens, you need to re-
member how all of this was so fake. The

eyes lie, but the nose always knows.
Remember that, okay?

MATT

Why?

BEN

Because you have to. Someone is playing
with your head, and they want you to
believe a lot of lies. Like this one.

BROADWAY lands squarely on BEN, bringing him to the ground with
a crunch. He violently claws at BEN, who screams once and then
stops suddenly. BROADWAY buries his face in BEN, feasting. MATT
rushes towards them.

MATT

No, get off, get off, get off of him!

BROADWAY looks up. His face is bloody, and his eyes are glowing.
MATT gasps and recoils. From behind, there is a gunshot. BROAD-
WAY looks back, screeches, and leaps away. SGT. JOE runs up from
behind, firing several shots into the air as he does.

SGT. JOE

What happened? How did it happen?

MATT

I don't know. It was so fast. Oh,
Ben...

SGT. JOE

Come on, we have to get out of here.
It's too open here.

MATT

All right. All right, let's go.

They rush off into the woods, and down the trail.

SGT. JOE

There's a cabin up ahead here that
looks safe. It should be enough to keep
them off for the night.

MATT

How far?

SGT. JOE
Only about another quarter mile.

From above, a series of shrieks and howls sounds.

SGT. JOE
(to the sky)
Oh, shut up!

EXT. SCENE - WOODS. CABIN. (NIGHT)

SGT. JOE and MATT reach the cabin. SGT. JOE tries to open the door, but it's locked. He winds up and hits it with the butt of his rifle, breaking the lock. He opens the door, and they dash through, closing it behind them.

INT. SCENE - CABIN.

SGT. JOE lights a match and looks around. He spots a lantern hanging off the wall, and lights it. The interior of the cabin is sparsely furnished: a couple of beds, a small camp stove, a basin. SGT. JOE quickly circulates around and searches the beds.

SGT. JOE
All clear in here.

There is a thud and the sound of scraping as claws slide down the tin roof of the cabin. SGT. JOE quickly bars the door. A moment later, there is a thump as something tries to force it open.

MATT
Will that hold them?

SGT. JOE
Maybe. I'm not sure. Is your gun loaded?

MATT
Yeah. What about Ben?

SGT. JOE
He's gone. I'm sorry. We'll get clear of here in the morning. I have friends in town that'll take care of us. And you will have your revenge after that. They will help you with that. So will I. I promise. For now, get some rest. I'll take watch.

MATT lies down on the bed. His tear-filled eyes slowly close as the sounds of thumping and shrieking from outside dim and grow distant.

INT. SCENE - HYPNOSIS LAB

MINA is monitoring the console. There is a quick double-beep.

MINA

And, we have quiescence.

She goes over to MATT and removes the goggles. The console gives off an electronic warning as she does.

MINA

He'll be up soon, and we'll see how he did. Louie?

LOUIE

All set. Right on time.

GOLIATH

What do you hope to achieve by any of this, anyway?

LOUIE

We're just serving the public, that's all.

MINA

Give him some room, please.

They do not move.

MINA

I think you'd better.

GOLIATH

Step away.

All of the gargoyles step away from MATT, but keep a watchful eye on MINA and LOUIE.

MATT takes a deep breath and stretches on the table. He grunts, and opens his eyes.

MATT

Um...oh.

MINA

Relax, please. You're in the hypnosis lab.

MATT

Oh, am I? Why?

MINA

Sleep treatments. Do you remember?

MATT

No, I don't. I know I needed to get more sleep.

MINA

Well, we gave you a treatment to help.

MATT

Feels like it did. Wow.

He slides off the table and puts his feet on the floor.

MATT

Oh, I had some interesting dreams, though.

MINA

Another common side effect. Tell me about them.

MATT

I was in the woods with my brother, traveling. And we were attacked by, by...

His eye is drawn to the shadows around the edges of the room. He begins to make out the gargoyles standing there. His eyes go wide, and he stumbles back.

MATT

What is--what is--what is that?

BROADWAY

Matt, take it easy, it's us. Remember?

MATT

No. Yes, I remember. Am I--do you see that?

MINA

Yes, I see them.

LOUIE

So do I. They must have got past the guards.

BROADWAY

What guards?

GOLIATH steps towards MATT.

GOLIATH

Matt, we are friends. We will not harm you.

MATT

That's impossible.

LEXINGTON

What have you done to him?

MINA

Fixed his mind so he can get some peace.

LEXINGTON

Fixed, nothing. He's terrified.

LOUIE

As he should be, especially given what you did to him 17 years ago.

GOLIATH

What do you mean?

BROADWAY approaches MATT from behind.

BROADWAY

Matt, listen, listen. It's me.

MATT

You.

BROADWAY

Me. Remember me?

MATT

You!

MATT leaps at BROADWAY, enraged. He puts his hands around his neck. BROADWAY resists him, but as gently as he can.

BROADWAY

Matt! Matt! It's me! Let go!

GOLIATH

Get off of him!

MATT

You killed my brother! You murderer!

BROADWAY

I've never met your brother! Let me go!

HUDSON

What have you done to him?

LEXINGTON

Matt, get off of him!

MATT

You killed my brother and then you ate him. I am not letting you go this time! For my brother!

He wrenches his hands in tighter, trying to strangle BROADWAY, who finally wrenches his arms apart and flips him away. MATT lands on his back and rolls into the wall, and stumbles to his feet. BROADWAY, enraged, turns to MINA, as do the other gargoyles.

BROOKLYN

That was a mistake you will regret.

He steps toward her. At this moment, LOUIE springs onto LEXINGTON's back. He gets one arm around his neck and reaches for the gun in LEXINGTON's belt. LEXINGTON fights him.

LEXINGTON

You get off of me!

MINA

Matt! Help me!

LOUIE gets the gun out of LEXINGTON's belt and tosses it to MATT, who catches it and points it at BROOKLYN. BROOKLYN turns to face him, and his eye darkens. LOUIE bails off LEXINGTON, who turns to face him down.

MATT

You stay away from her, you monster.

BROOKLYN

Matt. Don't.

GOLIATH

Put that down!

HUDSON

Are you mad? What has happened to you?

BROOKLYN

They've brainwashed him, that's what.
Matt, please. We are friends.

MATT

Brainwashed! Because I finally remember
what you are?

LOUIE

Come on, Matt, run for it!

MINA runs to MATT, and they work their way around the room. GOLIATH is in his way and does not yield. MATT aims at him.

MATT

Get out of the way.

GOLIATH

No. We're not letting this happen.

MATT

You will, with a step or a bullet. Your
choice.

GOLIATH steps out of the way and MATT scoots toward the door.
MINA bolts out the door, and MATT turns to face the room.

MATT

I don't know what any of you had
planned, but I won't let it happen. I
will not allow this.

HUDSON

Matt, do not do this.

MATT backs out toward the door.

MATT

The rest of you I have problems with.
If we meet again, I will kill you. But
you and I, we have a prior.

He aims at BROADWAY, and the sight goes green.

MATT

For my brother.

He fires. BROADWAY dives to the side. The bullet grazes his
shoulder and buries itself in the wall. MATT runs away. BROADWAY
looks after him, stunned.

BROADWAY

We have to go get him.

GOLIATH

Not while he is armed.

BROADWAY

We have to help him!

LOUIE

You are too late. He's ours now.

GOLIATH, eyes alight, turns to him.

GOLIATH

Do not think for a moment that this is
the end of this. We will protect our
friends--

LOUIE

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Keep talking.

GOLIATH growls at him. The monitor on the console comes on, sud-
denly, showing DR. COTTER.

COTTER

Et cetera, et cetera. Go on, Louie, I
have it from here.

LOUIE

Thank you, doctor.

He exits.

COTTER

And as for you, Goliath, there are several hundred people in Manhattan who'd have a lot to say about how well you protect your friends.

GOLIATH

What do you know about that?

COTTER

Everything. I'm the one who sent the storm to you.

GOLIATH

You?!

COTTER

Me!! More or less, I mean, atmospheric conditions did play a major role in it.

GOLIATH

That was Demona's doing.

COTTER

With my help, or did you actually think she could do it on her own?

GOLIATH recoils, astonished, as the others look at him.

COTTER

No. Really? You did? Oh, this is juicy. This is excellent. She'll be so flattered.

BROOKLYN

People died because of that storm.

COTTER

Yes, I suppose that they did. Oh well. Martyrs to a better tomorrow.

GOLIATH

And who are you?

COTTER

Doctor Victoria Cotter. You may assign me any name of your own that you wish. It'll hardly matter in a short while.

BROADWAY

Good, because I have plenty of--

COTTER

You can save them. I've already heard them, I'm sure.

BROOKLYN stands and goes to face the console.

BROOKLYN

Give me my friend back.

COTTER

No.

BROOKLYN

He can't have any value to you. Give him back to me.

COTTER

No. The fact you think he's got no value to us just says why not.

GOLIATH

What value, then?

COTTER

Take a guess. Go on.

BROOKLYN

Cotter, if you do not--

COTTER

That's "doctor," if you don't mind.

BROOKLYN

I'm through playing games with you. If you do not return him to me, I will find you and I will end you.

COTTER

Oh, brilliant! That's the best news I've had all week. That'll save me all the trouble to hunt you down.

BROOKLYN roars in supreme rage and punches the monitor, destroying it completely. A klaxon begins to sound.

COTTER

Oh! You ruthless beasts, you. Look what you have done to my lab. I'd say you have about, oh, thirty seconds before armed security shows up. If I were you, I'd run.

The sound of footsteps approaches rapidly up the hall. GOLIATH looks towards it, anxiously.

BROOKLYN

Cotter! I am going to--

GOLIATH

Enough! We leave now.

BROOKLYN

No! I am going to get him back from her!

GOLIATH

You can't do that here, now go! Now!

BROOKLYN relents, and all the gargoyles run into the hallway.

COTTER

Goliath!

He looks back.

COTTER

See how well you protect your friends.

He snarls towards her, and then takes to the hallway.

INT. SCENE - CENTRAL CONTROL. MANAGER'S OFFICE.

COTTER sits in front of a terminal showing a live feed of the lab, and showing GOLIATH running out of the lab behind the gargoyles. She laughs, and then switches off the feed.

COTTER

Oh, that ought to keep him busy for a while.

There is a ringing noise as a call comes in. COTTER answers. BRAD LEVIN appears on the screen.

LEVIN

Well?

COTTER

All set. Pegram's been turned, and the gargoyles are riled up.

LEVIN

Excellent.

COTTER

Of course it was.

LEVIN

How soon can we begin?

COTTER

Our job was just to prep them. Dealing with them, that's your business. But remember: no direct action until the new year, that was our bargain.

LEVIN

I know, but it'll be hard to enforce.

COTTER

Then you will have to enforce it however you can. That is your problem to solve. Trust in us to deliver, however. Haven't we so far?

LEVIN

Yes, I suppose you have.

The console beeps.

COTTER

I've got another call. Just stand by for word. Once we've got them, I'll let you know.

LEVIN

Do that. Goodbye.

COTTER

Bye.

She drops the first call and then picks up the second. It is DEMONA.

COTTER

You've picked a good time to call,
ma'am.

DEMONA

It is done?

COTTER

It is being done. Pegram has been
turned.

DEMONA

But you have not yet turned Goliath.

COTTER

No. That was our plan, remember?

DEMONA

I grow weary of these delays.

COTTER

Haste makes waste. If you would let us
destroy them, we could speed up--

DEMONA

By no means!

COTTER

Well, then. You must let the process
continue. Goliath is hooked. Brooklyn
is definitely hooked. All we have to do
is to reel them in and they are yours.

DEMONA

Are you sure?

COTTER

I delivered you a storm, didn't I?

DEMONA

Yes.

COTTER

Then why would you doubt me now? Things
are moving, have confidence. You will
have them before the solstice. Seven
will rise, Chicago will fall, Pigasus
will fly again.

=END=